

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ILO, ELAB, AR

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR INFO ON ILO ACTIVITIES

SAN JOSE FOR ARA LABOR ADVISOR O'GRADY

REF: (A) STATE 203991, (B) STATE 205687

1. SINCE ARRIVAL IN COUNTRY, LABATT HAS RECEIVED WIDE RANGE OF OPINIONS FROM LABOR CONTACTS CONCERNING EFFECTIVENESS OF ILO PROGRAMS IN ARGENTINA. MOST OF THESE COMMENTS, HOWEVER, WERE OF TOO GENERAL A NATURE AND OF INSUFFICIENT DEPTH TO PERMIT SYSTEMATIC EVALUATION ENVISIONED IN REFTEL A.

2. LABOR MINISTER (GENERAL) LIENDO HAD NOTHING BUT PRAISE FOR ILO ACTIVITIES IN ARGENTINA AND ITS PRESENT DIRECTOR, DR. PERLA ROQUE DE MARINELLI, WHO IS A FORMER LABOR MINISTRY OFFICIAL. FORMER LABOR MINISTER RUBENS SAN SEBASTIAN, HOWEVER, PROBABLY THE MOST ERUDITE OF THOSE CONSULTED, THOUGHT THAT ILO PROGRAMS IN ARGENTINA HAVE LACKED IMAGINATION AND HAVE HAD NEGLIGIBLE IMPACT. HE ALSO BELIEVES THAT ILO DIRECTORS HERE HAVE BEEN OF INSUFFICIENT STATURE TO CONDUCT THE LEVEL OF PROGRAMS THE COUNTRY REQUIRES. THE OUTGOING HISTRADUT REPRESENTATIVE, ON THE OTHER HAND, THOUGHT THAT THE ILO PROGRAMS HAD BEEN EFFECTIVE IN THE PAST, BUT DOUBTED THAT THERE HAS BEEN MUCH
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ACTIVITY SINCE THE GOLPE OF MARCH 24, 1976, AND THE ADVENT

OF THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT, WHICH HAS SUSPENDED TRADE UNION LIBERTIES AND WORKER RIGHTS ON PUBLIC EMERGENCY GROUNDS. NEVERTHELESS, BOTH DR. MARINELLI AND LABOR MIN LIENDO STATED THAT GOA IS PREPARING A NEW REQUEST FOR ILO ASSISTANCE.

3. OPINIONS OF LABOR LEADERS VARIED GREATLY. UNFORTUNATELY. SOME THOUGHT THAT THE PURPOSE OF ASKING WAS TO FIND DIRT AND INGRATIATINGLY TAILORED THEIR RESPONSES ACCORDINGLY. SOME OF THE UNION LEADERS WITH THE GREATEST EXPOSURE TO INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS APPEAR TO HAVE MAINTAINED CONTACT WITH ILO OFFICE AND THINK HIGHLY OF THE PRESENT DIRECTOR. CGT SOURCES, HOWEVER, STATED THAT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE ILO OFFICE AND THE CGT IN THE PAST HAS BEEN NEGLIGIBLE AND PURELY PRO FORMA. THERE DOES NOT SEEM TO HAVE BEEN MUCH CONSULTATION WITH UNION LEADERS IN THE FORMULATION STAGE OF THE ILO PROJECTS. UNION LEADERS HAD GREATER PRAISE FOR OAS LABOR PROGRAMS, PRESUMABLY BECAUSE ILO ACTIVITIES IN ARGENTINA HAVE NOT FOCUSED ON TRADE UNIONS AS PRINCIPAL TARGET GROUP.

4. THE PRINCIPAL PROJECT, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, WHICH IS ABOUT TO TERMINATE THIS YEAR, WAS CHanneLED THROUGH THE GOVERNMENT'S VOCATIONAL EDUCATION SCHOOL SYSTEM. CONCEPTUALLY, THE PROJECT WOULD APPEAR TO BE AN APPROPRIATE AND VALUABLE ONE FOR ARGENTINA, I.E. TO UPGRADE TRADE SKILLS AND THEREBY RELIEVE IMPORTANT MANPOWER GAPS. HOWEVER, AN EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM'S EFFECTIVENESS WILL REQUIRE FIRST-HAND OBSERVATION.

5. DURING COURSE OF COURTESY CALL AT ILO REGIONAL OFFICE (WHICH HAS RESPONSIBILITY FOR ARGENTINA, URUGUAY AND PARAGUAY), DR. MARINELLI STATED THAT THERE WAS A HIGH DEGREE OF COORDINATION AND MUTUAL COOPERATION AMONG OAS, ILO AND UNDP IN BUENOS AIRES, UNLIKE THE INSTITUTIONAL INFIGHTING WHICH TAKES PLACE IN OTHER CAPITALS.

6. LABATT HAS FOUND BOTH DR. MARINELLI AND ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, HERNAN RODRIGUEZ CAMPOAMOR (WHO HAS BEEN WITH THE ILO ALMOST HIS ENTIRE CAREER), TO BE EXTREMELY FRIENDLY AND COURTEOUS. MARINELLI IS INTERESTED IN ANY ASSISTANCE WE CAN GIVE HER IN THE WAY OF MATERIALS AND INQUIRED ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR A US LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LABOR ASSISTANCE PROGRAM IN ARGENTINA. SHE REQUESTED ANOTHER SET OF THE US LABOR DEPARTMENT DIRECTORY OF LABOR ORGANIZATIONS, PARTICULARLY THE WESTERN EUROPE AND WESTERN HEMISPHERE VOLUMES, NOTING SHEEPISHLY THAT A PREVIOUS SET PRESENTED TO THE ILO LIBRARY IN BUENOS AIRES HAD BEEN LOST ON ACCOUNT OF INADEQUATE CONTROL MEASURES IN THE PAST. SHE NOTED THAT THIS WAS DEFICIENCY WHICH HAS NOW BEEN CORRECTED. IF SUCH VOLUMES ARE STILL AVAILABLE (NO MATTER HOW DATED), EMBASSY WOULD BE INTERESTED IN SATISFYING

REQUEST. SUCH ASSISTANCE ON OUR PART WILL DEMONSTRATE OUR
CONTINUED DESIRE TO BE HELPFUL AND HELP US TO CONTINUE EVALUATING
ILO PROGRAMS FURTHER.

7. LABATT BELIEVES THAT BEST APPROACH TO EVALUATE FAIRLY
AND COMPREHENSIVELY ILO ACTIVITIES ON SYSTEMATIC BASIS IS TO
MAKE DIRECT INQUIRY AND, IF NECESSARY, STATE REASONS TO ILO
OFFICE. WE HAVE NOTED THAT REFTEL B AUTHORIZES US TO MAKE
INQUIRIES, WHEREAS EMPHASIS IN REFTEL A IS ON IN-HOURSE EVALUATION
AND DISCREETNESS, ETC. REQUEST CONFIRMATION THAT REFTEL B PERMITS
US TO MAKE STRAIGHTFORWARD APPROACH.

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